(b) if not, the facts in this regard;

(c) whether it is also fact that among the rest 30 per cent labour class, the number of skilled labourers is estimated to be less than 50 per cent;

(d) if not, the Overage number of total skilled labour class during each of last three years; and

(e) the Overage requirement of skilled labourers in the country during each of last three years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES): (a) and (b) Estimates of employment and unemployment are obtained through quinquennial labour force surveys conducted by National Sample Survey Organisation. Last such survey, for which results are available, was conducted during 2004-05. As per this survey, percentage of the non-literate and literate up to primary level education workers combined together both in organised and unorganised sectors comes to 64.7% of the total work force on usual status basis during 2004-05. The corresponding figure for the year 1999-2000 was about 66.91 per cent. This clearly indicates that there has been an improvement in educational level of the work force over the period, which is attributable to the efforts made by the Central and State Governments through various programmes launched for the purpose of enhancing literacy rate.

(c) to (e) As per the 61st Round Survey Report of National Sample Survey Organisation, among persons of age 15-29 years, about 2% reported to have received formal vocational training and another 8% non formal vocational training. However, average requirement of skilled labourers is not maintained.

Investment of EPF in equities

1749. SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to invest five per cent of employees' provident fund into equities;

(b) if so, the amount so invested and the percentage of investment returns expected therefrom; and

(c) the interest on EPF demanded by the employed and Government's decision thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES): (a) and (b) The recommendation of the Central Board of Trustees (Employees' Provident Fund) has not yet been received by the Government. As such, no investment is being made in equities.

(c) The Employees' Representatives are against any reduction in the existing rate of interest. The rate of interest for the year 2006-07 is, however, yet to be recommended by the Board.

Special salary to employees of EPFO

1750. SHRI S. ANBALAGAN: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government issued orders in 2003 for special salary to Accounts related offices, but the benefits were not extended to employees of Employees Provident Fund Organization (EPFO), though they deal with accounts;

(b) if so, the resons therefor;

(c) whether Government propose to increase salaries of employees of EPFO, on par with these of other Accounts-related Government offices; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and by when it is likely to be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES): (a) and (b) Government of India issued orders dated 28.02.2003 for upgradation of pay scales of Organized Accounts Cadres. The benefit was not extended to any Accounts post not belonging to one of the Organized Accounts Cadres. Employees' Provident Fund Organization is not having any Organized Accounts Cadre post.

(c) and (d) A proposal to increase salaries of employees of EPFO on par with those of Accounts related Government offices is being examined in the Ministry of Labour and Employment.

Success of Indus project

1751. SHRI SITARAM YECHURY: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) what is the magnitude of child labour population in different States, as per the latest available data;